



# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **HOWARD COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**



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### **Howard County Fire and Police Departments partner for Distracted Driving Awareness Month**

In an effort to make roads safer, the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (HCDFRS) and Howard County Police Department (HCPD) are partnering together to educate motorists about the risks of distracted driving. April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month and both departments have pledged to spread the message to drivers that distracted driving is not only hazardous to themselves, but to others as well.

“Informing our community about the dangers of cell phone use and other distractions while driving is imperative,” said County Executive Allan H. Kittleman. “Our hope is that people realize the potential risks involved and that they discontinue bad habits in order to help protect not only themselves, but also their families and others on the road.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2014:

- Crashes involving distracted drivers killed 3,179 people and injured 431,000.
- Ten percent of all drivers ages 15 to 19 in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the collision. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of their crash.
- Throughout the U.S., 244 people aged 15 to 19 were killed in distraction-affected crashes.

“The best way to end distracted driving is to educate our community about the threat it poses,” said Fire Chief John S. Butler. “If something as simple as putting down the phone while driving can save lives, we want to make sure we get that message out to as many people as possible. Every driver has a stake in this effort.”

“Driving a motor vehicle is a privilege that requires a person’s full attention at all times,” added Police Chief Gary L. Gardner. “Taking your eyes off the road, even for a matter of seconds, can have dire consequences to you, your passengers and others on the road. No text or phone call while driving is worth your life, or someone else’s.”

Distracted driving enforcement details will be conducted by the Howard County Police Department and other law enforcement agencies across the state for the entire month.

For additional information and safety tips, please visit [facebook.com/hcdfrs](https://facebook.com/hcdfrs) and [facebook.com/howardcountypolicedepartment](https://facebook.com/howardcountypolicedepartment).

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